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Iowa School Districts Help Reduce Achievement Gap State Board of Education honors four lowa districts with Breaking Barriers award

DES MOINES, **Iowa** – Four school districts were honored by the State Board of Education today for improving gaps in student achievement. Boone, Forest City, Shenandoah, and Webster City community school districts each received a Breaking Barriers to Learning and Teaching Award, which was created by the State Board of Education to recognize successful efforts to eliminate achievement gaps by improving instruction, curriculum and programs, and professional development opportunities for school staff.

"Many of the districts honored this year have helped low-income students gain greater success on our state test," said State Board of Education President Rosie Hussey. "I think now, as lowa faces challenging economic times, this award highlights the significant role our schools play in not only helping each child succeed, but our communities and state as a whole grow and remain strong."

Districts earned the award if they made significant improvement among any subgroup of students in at least two grade levels, without allowing any other subgroup of students to decline significantly.

This year, the Board is also giving a special recognition to school districts that have high number of students in the groups often identified as being part of the achievement gap. The "achievement gap" in education refers to the disparity in academic performance between groups of students.

Among the districts with the highest percentage of low-income, special education, and minority students and the highest percent of English language learners in the state, the following districts have the highest percent of students proficient on the lowa Testing Program tests in reading and math.

Math 3-5

Dows Community School District

Marshalltown Community School District

Waterloo Community School District

South Tama County Community School District

Wapello Community School District

West Sioux Community School District

Postville Community School District

Des Moines Independent Community School District

Muscatine Community School District

Estherville Lincoln Central Community School District

Math 6-8

Des Moines Independent Community School District

Sidney Community School District

Wapello Community School District

CAL Community School District

Sioux Center Community School District

Perry Community School District

Marshalltown Community School District

Waterloo Community School District

South Tama County Community School District

Forest City Community School District

Reading 3-5

Dows Community School District

Marshalltown Community School District

Waterloo Community School District

Postville Community School District

South Tama County Community School District

West Sioux Community School District

Lamoni Community School District

Wapello Community School District

Estherville Lincoln Central Community School District

Des Moines Independent Community School District

Reading 6-8

Des Moines Independent Community School District

Wapello Community School District
Perry Community School District
CAL Community School District
Marshalltown Community School District
Pomeroy-Palmer Community School District
Sidney Community School District
Waterloo Community School District
Aurelia Community School District
South Tama County Community School District

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The State Board of Education and the lowa Department of Education provide oversight, supervision, and support for the state education system that includes all public elementary and secondary schools, nonpublic schools that receive state accreditation, area education agencies, community colleges, and teacher preparation programs. The State Board of Education consists of ten members: nine voting members who are appointed by the governor for six-year terms and subject to Senate confirmation; and one nonvoting student member who serves a one-year term, also appointed by the governor.